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ABSTRACT

The third of eight related documents, this booklet is part of a series of papers presented at the 1978 National Right to Read Conference examining issues and problems in literacy. In its examination of the relationship between literacy and career development, the booklet first defines the components of basic literacy and of career development and presents charts and cites reports that show the correlation between them. It then presents, in outline form, six programs that attempt to link literacy to career development or job training. Having identified five problems that have arisen in such programs, it suggests strategies for solving them. A strategy for developing a program that relates literacy and career development is outlined in the appendix. (HTH)

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LITERACY: MEETING THE CHALLENGE

Relating Literacy Development to Career Development

Allen B. Moore

CS006446

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE
Patricia Harris, *Secretary*
William L. Smith, *Commissioner*
Office of Education

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The material in this booklet was presented at the National Right to Read Conference, Washington, D.C., May 27-29, 1978. The material was edited by the staff of the National Institute of Advanced Study which conducted the Conference under contract from the U.S. Office of Education.

FOREWORD

A major goal to the Right to Read Program has been to disseminate information about the status of literacy education, successful products, practices and current research finding in order to improve the instruction of reading. Over the years, a central vehicle for dissemination have been Right to Read conferences and seminars. In June 1978, approximately 350 Right to Read project directors and staff from State and local education and nonprofit agencies convened in Washington, D.C. to consider Literacy: Meeting the Challenge.

The conference focused on three major areas:

- examination of current literacy problems and issues
- assessment of accomplishments and potential resolutions regarding literacy issues; and
- exchange and dissemination of ideas and materials on successful practices toward increasing literacy in the United States.

All levels of education, preschool through adult, were considered.

The response to the Conference was such that we have decided to publish the papers in a series of individual publications. Additional titles in the series are listed separately as well as directions for ordering copies.

SHIRLEY A. JACKSON
Director, Basic Skills Program

LITERACY MEETING THE CHALLENGE

A Series of Papers Presented at the National Right to Read Conference May 1978

Assessment of Reading Competencies
Donald Fisher

How Should Reading Fit Into a Pre-School Curriculum
Bernard Spodex

Relating Literacy Development to Career Development
Allen B. Moore

Private Sector Involvement in Literacy Efforts
"The Corporate Model for Literacy Involvement"
Lily Fleming
"Reading Alternative: Private Tutoring Programs"
Daniel Bassill
"Building Intellectual Capital: The Role of Education in Industry"
Linda Stoker

Who is Accountable for Pupil Illiteracy?
Paul Tractenberg

Publishers' Responsibilities in Meeting the Continuing Challenge of Literacy
Kenneth Komoski

Can Public Schools Meet the Literacy Needs of the Handicapped?
Jules C. Abrams

The Basic Skills Movement: Its Impact on Literacy
Thomas Sticht

Literacy: Competency and the Problem of Graduation Requirements
William G. Spady

Projections In Reading
"Teaching Reading in the Early Elementary Years"
Dorsey Hammond
"Adult Literacy"
Oliver Patterson
"Reading Programs: Grades Seven Through Twelve"
Harold Herber

SUMMARY

Overview

This paper defines the components of basic literacy and of career development, then presents charts and cites reports that show the correlation between them. It next presents in outline form six programs that attempt to link literacy to career development or job training. Having identified five problems that have arisen in such programs, it suggests strategies for solving them. In an appendix it outlines a strategy for developing a program that relates literacy and career development.

Correlation Between Basic Literacy and Career Development

First citing the Adult Performance Level finding that large numbers of adults lack basic survival skills, including the ability to match their personal qualifications to advertised job requirements, the author goes on to establish the correlation between literacy development, i.e., the acquisition of basic literacy skills, and career development which he groups into five components. He analyzes the components, explains them, and identifies the skills they entail. He then demonstrates the relationship between them and basic literacy skills, using the APL Matrix, other charts, and statements drawn from a National Center for Education Statistics Report.

Programs, Problems, and Strategies

Six programs that attempt to link literacy development to career development or job training are presented in a summary that includes their purpose, activities, funding source, and contact person and also a comment from an administrator or participant. Among the problems that have arisen in the design, operation, and evaluation of such programs, the following are identified:

- A question regarding the level of literacy requisite for career development and/or eligibility for career development programs;
- Immature or unmotivated participants who cause discipline problems, distract or demoralize other participants, and absorb scarce resources;
- The difficulty of persuading people that they can change their lives, together with the hard fact that, even with basic literacy skills, they can anticipate only low-paying jobs with little future.

Strategies for solving these and other problems include: clearly communicating to potential recruits what the program can help them do and counseling for the duration of the program; separating disruptive youth from their peers and adult participants; incorporating job information and career development activities into literacy programs; and maintaining contact with program alumni who find jobs.

RELATING LITERACY TO CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Introduction

Literacy development or acquiring basic literary skills includes the ability to read, write, speak, compute and apply these skills in problem solving (see figure 1). A recent national study, entitled Adult Performance Level (APL), (1) found that a large number of adults could not perform basic everyday survival skills. For example, the study estimated that 86 million adults could not figure miles per gallon of gasoline for their car, 48 million could not determine the correct change from a purchase, 30 million could not interpret the deductions from a payroll statement and 52 million could not match personal qualifications to advertised job requirements. These examples stress reading, math and problem solving skills which are the foundation for career development, especially that of matching personal qualifications with job requirements.

Career development may be expressed in terms of personal awareness, job finding, job getting, job keeping and continuous adaptation to personal and job needs (see figure 1). Personal awareness is demonstrated by determining individual interests in jobs, working conditions, salary and benefits. What does the individual want to do? What are the working hours? Where is the job? What are the hazards? What are the rewards? What is the salary? What are the health/retirement benefits?

Job finding, getting and keeping are skills that can be learned. These skills can be developed after it is determined what type of work an individual is seeking. For most jobs there are education and experience requirements that should be understood. Jobs are found through friends, neighbors, employment and training programs (e.g., CETA), newspapers, labor unions, and by knocking on doors asking for employment. Getting the job generally includes mastering the skills of filling out an application and participating in an interview. Job keeping includes learning while working, maintaining good attitudes toward work and demonstrating the ability to get along with people.

Adaptability to job skills, work environment, and people are important skills which are related to job keeping. Individuals who can understand change, can see the need for change and who can adapt or roll with the punches when change takes place are more likely to be successful in their career development.

CAREER → DEVELOPMENT / ↓ LITERACY DEVELOPMENT	LITERACY AND CAREER (JOB) DEVELOPMENT				
	PERSONAL INTERESTS	JOB FINDING	JOB GETTING	JOB KEEPING	CONT. EDUC. (JOB CHANGING)
READING					
WRITING					
SPEAKING					
COMPUTING					
PROBLEM SOLVING					

FIGURE 1

Referring to the APL study again, the relationship between literacy development and career development can be illustrated by the APL Matrix in Figure 2.

Content Areas → / Skills ↓	Community Resources	Occupational Knowledge	Consumer Economics	Health	Government and Law
Identification Facts & Terms					
Reading					
Writing					
Computation					
Problem Solving					

FIGURE 2. APL MATRIX

The APL Matrix is used to show relationships between basic literacy (e.g., reading, writing, computation) illustrated by the skills on the left in Figure 2 and Content Areas, especially Occupational Knowledge. The goal for occupational knowledge is: To develop knowledge about occupations that will enable individuals to secure employment that fits their particular needs and interests. Specifically, the relationship is described by:

Literacy Development

- Reading
- Writing

Career Development

- Personal awareness (knowledge of self-interests, aptitudes and capabilities)

- Speaking
- Computation
- Problem Solving
- Job finding (aware of variety of jobs, knowledge of job requirements)
- Job getting (application and interviewing skills)
- Job keeping (OJT, continuous learning)
- Adaptability (coping with Change)

The basic premise or assumption for relating literacy development to career development is that: Career development is supported and facilitated by increased literacy development as illustrated in Figure 3.

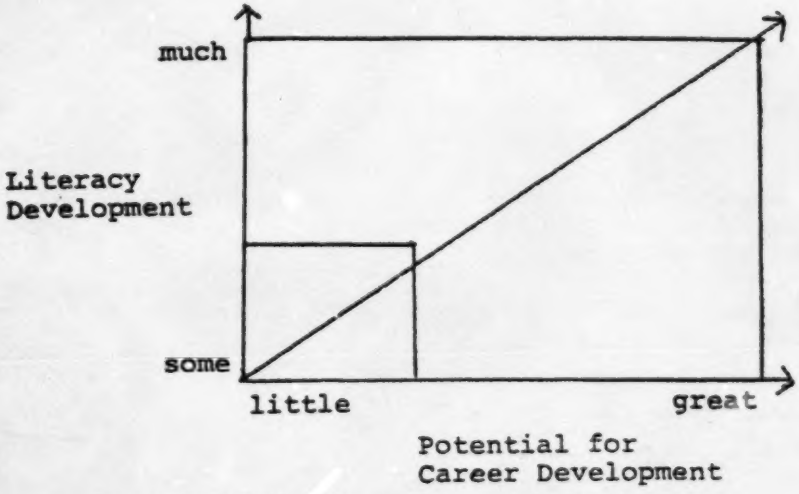

FIGURE 3. LITERACY AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Stated in another way, Figure 3 emphasizes the potential for career development as being increased by the acquisition of basic literacy skills (e.g., reading, writing, computation).

A National Center for Education Statistics report (2) describing career and occupational development states the relationship between literacy and career development as follows:

> Basic skills in mathematics, in writing, and in obtaining information are essential to the job seeker in a competitive labor market.

But skills alone are no. always sufficient.

A person must also have some knowledge about jobs and the world of work.

To make rational job choices, one must be aware of the variety of jobs that exist and have some knowledge of their various requirements.

One must also be aware of factors common to many employment situations.

To be an effective member of our mobile and rapidly changing work force one must also know:

- how to improve skills;
- what factors affect hiring and promotion;
- how to accept responsibility; and
- what conventions generally govern employer-employee relations.

Keeping these statements in mind, the following section describes selected programs that have attempted to link career development to literacy development.

Programs and Problems

Selected literacy and employment training programs are briefly described. Emphasis is given to the program purpose, description of the activity, funding source and contact person.

Figure 4 on page 9 summarizes the literacy and career development emphasis of the selected programs.

Career Education Project

Program Purpose:	To provide career counseling services to homebound adults.
Description:	The Educational Development Center under contract with the National Institute of Education designed a home and community-bound career education program for adults. It was designed to provide adults an understanding of their interest and career needs, job information, and help in implementing career plans. Mass media, telephone contacts and counseling services were the key components of the program.
Comment:	"The project provided information, guidance and referrals to over 5,000 adults aged 16–75, most of them women."

Funding Source:	National Institute of Education, NIE.
Contact:	Career Education Project Education Development Center 55 Chapel Street Newton, Massachusetts

Project "Apple Core"

Program Purpose:	Aid adults to improve academic and occupational skills necessary to retain and/or advance on the job.
Description:	Twenty employees (age 20–50) of a local canning factory participated in a basic education program (reading, writing, computing, problem solving) to improve their skills on the job. They were not paid to participate. However, a pay raise was promised if they completed the GED. Canning labels, gauges, and tools were used as instructional materials in the class.
Comment:	"Separate the cities from the states."
Funding Source:	Louisiana State Department of Education with funds from USOE for Adult Education.
Contact:	Mr. Robert Arceneaux, Director Adult Education Programs Lafayette, Louisiana

In Plant Basic Education Program

Program Purpose:	Basic education for Weyerhaeuser employees, spouses and local residents.
Description:	The Weyerhaeuser Company and Martin Technical Institute, Williamston, N.C. designed a program for basic education (reading, writing, speaking, and problem solving) for employees and others to upgrade their skills. Employees were given 1 hour time off from work to participate. The company and technical institute provided the facility, instructor, and materials. Members of the local labor unions affiliated with the AFL/CIO participated in the program and helped plan program activities.
Comment:	"I left school 40 years ago because of Shakespeare."
Funding Source:	Weyerhaeuser Company and Martin Technical Institute.

Contact: Ms. Johnsie Perkins
Weyerhaeuser Training Center
Plymouth, North Carolina

CETA Atlanta

Program Purpose: The Adult Basic Educational Component of the Atlanta CETA Program provides basic education (reading, writing, computation) and GED preparation to adult participants to enable them to reach their occupational goal.

Description: Adults are concurrently enrolled in basic education (4 hours – 2 hours reading, 2 hours math) and the work experience component (4 hours). They are paid a subsistence income for the work experience. The program has been successful in increasing some participants' functional levels by three years in only 6 month's time.

Comment: "Younger participants recruited into the program are creating learning and discipline problems."

Funding Source: Department of Labor Funds handled by Atlanta as prime sponsor.

Contact: Mayor of Atlanta

Director, Atlanta CETA Office

WIN – Augusta
("Accelerated Adult Education")

Program Purpose: Preparation for GED test for women who want to be employed within 3 months.

Description: Women entering the program must score at the eighth grade reading level or above on the California Adult Achievement Test (TABE, Test for Adult Basic Education). A teacher works with a small number (10–15) of participants to assist them in acquiring the skills necessary for passing the GED (General Education Development) test. Participants are paid a small amount per day ($3.50) to cover their transportation costs and meals.

Comment: "Older adult participants (age 24–45) appear to be more motivated and are easier to help than younger adults (age 18–23)."

Funding Source: Georgia Department of Labor

Contact: Mrs. Elsie Kuhr, Teacher
WIN – Augusta

Literacy Action

Program Purpose: Adults are taught to read at a variety of centers located through Atlanta and surrounding areas.

Description: Adults are taught how to read on an individual basis with tutors. Tutors are volunteers who have been trained to teach reading and to understand the needs, problems and strengths of beginning readers. On an individualized, one-to-one basis, basic concepts are taught and discussed in a process involving reading, writing, speaking and listening. Students who participate in this program come to understand how the "system" works; how they as individuals are functioning; and what action they must take to close the gap.

Funding Source: U.S. Office of Education, Right to Read Academy Program

Contact: Mr. Vern Pulling
Literacy Action, Inc.
201 Washington Street, S.W.
Atlanta, Georgia

Programs	Literacy Development	Career Development	Comment
Career Education Project		X	Counseling for home based adults-mostly women
Apple Core	X	X	Literacy development directly related to career development
In Plant	X		Some labor union involvement
CETA Atlanta	X	X	Problems with mixing youth and adults
WIN-Augusta	X	X	Older participants appear motivated
Literacy Action	X		Volunteers helping people to read

FIGURE 4. PROGRAM EMPHASIS

Problems

Several problems have occurred in the design, operation and evaluation of programs that try to relate literacy development to career development. Five such problems are identified for review and discussion (see Figure 5).

Literacy Level

What is the appropriate level of literacy to begin working on career development? If persons are determined to be reading at a less than 5th grade level they are not eligible for CETA. Literacy Action, Literacy Volunteers or some other agency may work with them to raise their level of literacy.

Maturity

CETA programs are identifying youth who are dropout prone to be involved in adult literacy and career development training programs. Many of these persons are immature, distractors to others in the program and become discipline problems.

Check Collectors or Learners

There are some individuals in CETA and other programs who participate in literacy and career development programs to collect a check. They take up space, bother other participants, infringe on the teacher's time and patience and create a situation that distracts or reduces the motivation of others. However, most of the other participants want to learn and they do learn even under difficult circumstances.

POSSIBLE STRATEGIES → / ↓ PROBLEMS	RECRUITING & COUNSELING	GROUPING	JOB INFORMATION	ON-JOB SUPPORT	FOLLOW UP	OTHERS
MATURITY						
LITERACY LEVEL						
CHECK COLLECTOR OR LEARNER						
MOTIVATION						
BAIT/SWITCH						

FIGURE 5. PROBLEMS AND POSSIBLE STRATEGIES

Motivation

There is the problem of getting people to realize they can make a difference in their own lives. Field trips and visits to worksites help the individual recognize the need for certain skills, how much education is needed for training, and skills required to be employed.

Bait and Switch

Is career development a bait and switch situation? Even with the acquisition of basic literacy skills most jobs are low paying with questionable promotion or long-term employment possibilities.

Possible Strategies

Possible strategies for solving some of the problems encountered in relating literacy development to career development include recruiting and counseling, grouping participants, job information, on-the-job support and follow-up (see Figure 5).

Recruiting and Counseling

When administrators, teachers and counselors contact youth or adults to participate in literacy and/or career development programs they should clearly describe what the program and staff can *help* (not guarantee) the participant do ... work toward the student's literacy and career goals. This dialogue should continue as long as the participant is in the program.

Group by Age/Maturity

If there are both youth and adults in a program and if the youth are considered to be immature (e.g., distract class, create disciplinary problems, bring drug related problems to class or group) it may be helpful to separate participants.

Job Information

Information about job options, skills and opportunities could be incorporated into literacy program activities. Filling out application forms, participating in simulated or real job interviews and visits to job sites could be used to expand career awareness and to reinforce literacy development.

On-Job Support

After getting a job how does one stay on the job? Program staff can provide information, counseling and support to the persons who have found a job. These activities could take place at the literacy program site, on-the-job or at another suitable location. The "new worker" could discuss problems and work situations with a person who is considered a friend.

Follow-Up

Keeping in contact with the "new worker" and employers can serve two purposes. First, it can provide a communication link between the program staff, employers and workers. Second, it can provide information to program staff regarding the need to change or upgrade literacy or career development activities.

Footnotes and Quotes

[1]Northcutt, Norvell. *Adult Functional Competency: A Summary*, University of Texas, Austin, 1975, p. 2.

[2]*Adult Work Skills and Knowledge: Selected Results from the First National Assessment of Career and Occupational Development.* National Center for Education Statistics. Sept. 1976. 05-COD-01 U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402, p. 5&6.

APPENDIX A

Strategy for Relating Literacy and Career Development

I. Determining literacy and career development needs of adults entering your agency/ organization.

   A. Formulate the needs of adults by:

      1. Interviewing to determine interests, ambitions, goals and needs for work.
      2. Determining range of familiarity with occupational opportunities.
      3. Determining previous work experience.
      4. An inventory (test) of achievement related to reading, writing, speaking, computation and problem solving.

   B. Involve adults in their literacy and career development planning.

      1. Invite adults to assist in developing *their own* program around their particular needs and interests.
      2. Help adults recognize the need for applying skills (reading, writing, speaking, computation problem solving) to real job opportunities.

   C. Consider the employment needs of adults and the community.

      1. Introduce adults to jobs available in the community, for example, industry, small businesses, and military.
      2. Determine the specific needs of adults, e.g., updating; upgrading; leisure study; college or technical training; entry into work force.
      3. Develop plans to inform adults about techniques of applying for jobs, preparing for interviews, finding job openings, getting and growing on the job.
      4. Consider methods of informing the community about the adult literacy and career development program.

II. Translate adult needs into goals.

   A. Develop a program of instruction assuring the adult of developing skills, attitudes, and knowledge necessary for the "next step": employment or additional training.

      1. Develop guides which integrate literacy and career elements with the individual adult's needs.
      2. Encourage activities involving knowledge about self and job environments.

3. Develop the attitude of dignity and worth toward all individuals regardless of their occupation.
4. Motivate adults by demonstrating and practicing the everyday use of *all* subject matter to present and future work needs, developmental tasks and life roles.
5. Reinforce through demonstration and practice the understanding of enthusiasm, good attitudes, punctuality, dedication as being as important to an employer as work skills.

B. Acquaint adults with community job needs by field trips, discussion with personnel managers, and interviews with employees.

C. Establish a job placement service for adults by providing contacts with employers during and after completion of the program.

D. Develop career programs for adults who want to complete high school, technical schools and college.

1. Introduce adults to resource materials.
2. Assist adults with planning and financial aid programs.
3. Assist adults in the development of short, medium and long-range career goals.

III. Assign priorities to program and participant goals.

A. Select as the first member of the staff a project director to supervise and coordinate program and budgeting.

B. Organize research and development component guidelines.

C. Develop counseling component guidelines.

1. Provide career and "next step" counseling for all adults.
2. Select counselors (teacher's aides, peers) with experience and training in working with adults.

D. Organize a community involvement component.

1. Select, ideally, two or more people to work in this component.
   a. Assign one person the responsibility of informing the community of the progress of the program through news releases, brochures, slide presentations, etc.
   b. Assign a second person the responsibility of contacting the business community for the purpose of organizing advisory committees, job placement and on-the-job training opportunities.
2. Place overall responsibility for the community involvement component with the public relations-information office, if one exists in your agency/organization.

E. Organize a job placement component.

1. Select someone with experience in dealing with the business community and in working with adults to coordinate this component.
2. Work with the local Chamber of Commerce and civic organizations to aid in developing this component.
3. Special attention and time devoted to such activities as locating jobs, placing adults and conducting follow-ups are important to continuing programs.

F. Develop inservice training component for program personnel.

1. Identify core staff who will coordinate the literacy and career development program.
2. Provide time for core staff to plan, develop and implement activities based upon identified needs and developmental stages of adult participants.
3. Schedule inservice program at locations convenient to staff.
4. Utilize a variety of persons to provide inservice training, for example, representatives from local schools, nearby career programs, business, industry, colleges and universities.
5. Support inservice programs with current up-to-date information, media and materials.

IV. Study funding sources.

A. Determine existing sources of funding within the local budget.

B. Investigate availability of funds from State and Federal sources.

C. Determine financial student services, priorities within the program. Possible priorities might be personnel costs and employee benefits, travel, supplies and materials and communications.

V. Determine methods of evaluation.

A. Use an external evaluator for objective reporting.

B. Develop internal pre-tests and achievement tests, or develop instruments to demonstrate desirable outcomes of the program.

C. Secure evaluation from participants, staff and community representatives.

D. Use the expertise of the business and industry community to assist in the planning, implementation and evaluation of the literacy and career development program.

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